

The Christian Life

PRAYER MEETING TOPICS

THE PROPHETS—HABAKKUK—NO. 2

III Sins Rebuked.

- a. Oppression of the righteous by the wicked. Ch. 1:4.
- b. Pride. Ch. 2:4.
- c. Drunkenness. Ch. 2:5.
- d. Greed. Ch. 2:5, 6.
- e. Violence and shedding of blood. Ch. 2:8.
- f. Covetousness. Ch. 2:9.
- g. Oppression. Ch. 2:12.
- h. Giving drink to a neighbor. Ch. 2:15.
- i. Idolatry. Ch. 2:18, 19. Col. 3:5.

IV. Life Lessons.

- a. God sometimes uses wicked nations to punish those still more wicked.
 1. Let us not as a nation impute our power over Spain to our own strength. Ch. 1:11.
- b. That a nation conquers is no sign of its righteousness.
 1. Jesus died at the hands of wicked men.
 - c. Only ultimate victory proves the worthiness of a cause.
 - d. Only righteousness in a man or a nation can secure God's blessing and avert destruction.
 1. Israel lives despite her often corrections, and her deep punishment for sin, simply because she is not all bad.
 - e. The destruction of wicked men and nations seems to tarry, it shall come and history justifies the ways of God.
 1. The Turk must yet cease from the earth.
 2. Our own nation is sleeping over a force that will yet destroy her if she repents not.
 - f. God's curse rests on him today who puts his bottle to his neighbor's lips, whether it be a man in an alley, in a harvest field, at his table, in a saloon, or a nation or state or town which for revenue allows the same to be done and becomes *particeps criminis* by its leave.
 - g. God's curse will rest on the man who oppresses the poor, or cheats his fellows or builds his prosperity by the cunning robbery of others, even tho he shares his plunder with God and the church.
 - h. Let us as Christians so long after Christ take as high a stand as the old prophet who stood amid the darkness of the Law and say with our lips and live it in our lives, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail and the fields shall yield no meat, and the flock shall be cut off from the fold and there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet will I rejoice in the Lord." That is faith, that is the victory that overcometh the world. Shall we have it?

J. L. GILLIN.

BRETHREN EVANGELIST

God In Our Life

S. B. Rossiter, D. D.

If God is a God who makes for righteousness, then the life that makes for righteousness with all its might runs coincident with God and will have the aid of God, and all that is over and above human effort will be on His side. And the contrary is true; the life that makes for unrighteousness—and many a life does—will sooner or later run up against the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler. That means the defeat of unrighteousness; and such defeat is better for a man than victory. Take Jehovah into account in all your planning. Do not be ashamed to kneel and say, "Lord, show me Thy will." Do not be ashamed to confess that you consult the unknown reserves of God's mind in all your planning. Some one said to the Duke of Wellington, if such and such a thing had happened, and if such another thing had not occurred, the issue of Waterloo had been different. The duke calmly replied, "I had supposed in the science of war all these probabilities were taken into account." If you would have your life run straight and true, take into your account all the accessories of life, and especially what God would have you be and do. Life will be a failure if you do not regard God's will concerning it.

In the Way of the Spirit

The Churchman.

In his quaint and delightful discourse on the way in which we ought to receive intimations from God, St. Francis of Sales says: "By inspirations are meant all those interior attractions, motions, reproaches, and remorse, illuminations, and instructions which God excites in us, preventing our heart with his blessings, through his fatherly care and love, in order to awaken, stimulate, urge and attract us to the practice of holy virtues, to heavenly love, to good resolutions, and, in a word, to everything that may help us on our way to eternal happiness."

It is impossible to read these words without receiving from them an impression of cumulative influences flowing about us with deepening current and bearing us onward toward God. In the secret places of our own natures, far below our consciousness and beyond our knowledge, divine impulses are constantly rising to guide and steady us; in the silence and solitude of our inner lives, voices are always warning, consoling and encouraging us. God is forever seeking paths of approach to our souls, and in ways past finding out assailing us with divine influences. Every man who knows himself knows that this is true; for such a one knows that when he heeds the highest that is in him, he is borne mysteriously above himself; and when he listens to the lower voices, he falls mysteriously below himself. This is, of course, the very heart of Christ's truth; for he came not to give expression to man's aspirations, but to reveal the eternal reality which justifies these aspirations and fulfills them. Nothing gives the broken and con-

fused life of man such dignity and spiritual romance as this continual approach of God to the soul through those half-understood intimations, illuminations, and instructions which St. Francis wisely calls "inspirations." For this word suggests our part in this mysterious fellowship.

What Your Saviour Wants

Phillips Brooks.

Is there nothing that Christ as your Friend, your Lord, your Saviour, wants you to do that you are leaving undone today?

Do you doubt one instant with his high and deep love for your soul that he wants you to pray? And do you pray?

Do you doubt one instant that it is his will that you should honor and help and bless all the men about you, who are his brethren? And are you doing anything like that?

Do you doubt one instant that his will is that you should make life serious and lofty? Do you doubt one instant that he wants you to be pure in deed and word and thought? Are you pure?

Do you doubt one instant that his command is for you openly to own him, and declare that you are his servants before all the world? And have you done it?

These are questions which make the whole matter clear. No, not in quiet lanes, nor in bright temple courts as once he spake, and not from blazing heavens as men sometimes seem to expect—not so does Christ speak to us.

And yet he speaks! I know what he—there in all his glory—he here in my heart—wants me to do today, and I know that I am not mistaken in my knowledge. It is no guess of mine. It is his voice that tells me.

They Are Children

The Christian Commonwealth

Don't expect too much of them; it has taken you forty years, it may be, to make you what you are, with all your lessons of experience, and I dare say you are a faulty being at best. Above all don't expect judgment in a child, or patience under trial. Sympathize in their mistakes and troubles; don't ridicule them. Remember not to measure a child's trial by your standard. "As one whom his mother comforteth," says the inspired writer; and beautifully does he convey to us the deep, faithful love which ought to be found in every woman's heart, the unfailing sympathy with all her children's griefs.

Let the memories of their childhood be as bright as you can make them. Grant them every innocent pleasure in your power. It has often roused our indignation to see how carelessly their little plans were thwarted by older persons, when a very little trouble on their part would have given the child pleasure, the memory of which would last a lifetime.

Lastly, don't think a child hopeless because it betrays some very bad habits. We have known children who seem to have been